

# Shroomed

By Martin Brady

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Aliens decide to attack a small village called Ballynobber in Ireland during a music festival. How will Ireland and this small village cope with an Alien Invasion? More importantly, what will it do to the price of a pint of Guinness?

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# Farmer Pat

County Longford, Ballynobber, Ireland

Farmer Pat drove his tractor through the early morning mist which was being burned off by the rising sun.

In the distance there was a giant forest which housed a camp-site called Camp Long.

As Pat drove across the sloping field something flew overhead.

He looked up and saw dozens of UFOs heading towards the forest.

Farmer Pat checked his pockets and knew something was wrong.

He stopped his tractor as the UFOs disappeared into the forest.

He dialled home on his mobile.

His wife Aideen answered.

"I forgot to bring me ham sandwiches," said Pat.

She replied, telling Pat that she would get one of the lads to drop up the sandwiches.

# Different

"And the winner is..."

The two teenage brothers Michael and James Woods stood side by side with their guitars.

The kids from the School Talent competition called out their favourites.

"Michael and James!" said the teacher.

The brothers hugged each other and jumped up and down and received the ten Euro cheque and box of crisps.

The girls from their classes rushed over to them.

"What is your band called?" asked one of them.

"We're Different," said James.

"What?" asked Jemima.

"Our band is called Different."

Frank who was in Michael's class walked over to them and placed his hand on their shoulders.

"That name is absolutely shite but your music is not bad. You need a drummer? I also play keyboards."

Michael looked at Frank. "Try outs are on Tuesday."

James leaned forward.

"One day Frank we're going to be famous. This is only the beginning."

# The Band

Try outs-

Frank immediately joined the band when he played the bass.

Then Ela turned up and did some harmonies.

Michael and James just looked at her admiringly as she sang Penny Lane.

"Have you been in a band before?" asked Frank.

"Two," said Ela. "One of the bands was in Poland."

"Any questions?" asked Frank.

"Who is the Lead Singer?" she asked.

"I AM" said James.

"I write the songs, he just sings them," said Michael dismissively.

Ela looked at James and gave him a smile.

"Rehearsals are next week," said Frank. "You're in."

Just before they went home, Niall turned up.

"Am I too late?"

Niall's hair drooped over his eyes.

"What do you do?" asked Frank.

"I play the drums."

"Ok you are in, we rehearse next week," said Frank.

"Don't you want to hear me play?" asked Niall.

"Next week in the community centre. Be there," said Frank.

And so the band was formed.

Different.

# The Never Ending Row

In rehearsals James was fighting with Michael.

"If you sang it like I wrote it then I wouldn't ask you to do it again!" complained Michael.

"If I sing it like you want people will kick us off the stage. We have to give it something extra."  
James grabbed his crotch and stuck out his tongue.

Ela grinned.

"IT'S A SONG ABOUT THE PASSAGE OF TIME!! YOU'RE MISSING THE WHOLE POINT."

In the corner of the room, Frank just shook his head.

"Why are they always fighting?" moaned Frank.

"It goes back a long way," said Ela.

"Really," said Frank.

"When they were both very small they both wanted the same toy from Santa Claus. When James tells me the story, he is very angry - even now!"

"Go on," said Frank.

"They both want He Man toy but James gets it and Michael gets Action Man. Michael is very angry because Action Man is crap," said Ela. "So James breaks Michael's He Man. He breaks his head off. James never forgives him," said Ela.

Niall was listening in.

"In all fairness, Action man is crap," said Niall and then rattled the drums a little like there was a storm coming.

# Happy Birthday

After band practise Frank brought in a cake with a lit candle.

"What's this?" asked Michael.

"We're one," smiled Frank. "Our band is one year old."

Frank had decided to be in charge of the band.

He lifted the cake and Ela blew out the candle.

"I hate sponge cake," said Niall.

"You can eat the candle then," replied Frank quickly. He then took a piece of paper out of his pocket with a series of bullet points. "Most bands don't last more than one year so I came up with some rules for the band."

"Let hear them," said Michael with a mouthful of cake.

"We all own the songs that are written. Everyone gets an equal share in the royalties."

"Shag off," said Michael. "Next."

"Next rule, we have to appeal to our fans so no-one in the band can go out with anyone. It'll hurt our record sales," said Frank.

"Shag off," said James and he threw his arm over Ela's shoulder.

"Also and importantly, you two need to stop arguing all the time," said Frank.

Ela and Niall nodded. "That's a good one," said Niall.

"SHAG OFF!!" said Michael and James in unison.

"That's all I have," said Frank and he ate some of the remaining cake.

# Are You Lost?

Ballynobber Village near Camp Long, Fifty Thousand Feet Up In The Air

Maureen and Seamus woke up on board a space craft.

They had been in their beds on their farm near Camp Long forest and suddenly they found themselves in this strange alien room.

On board the ship, there were views from hidden cameras on the surface fifty thousand feet below. The aliens monitored Camp Long and the village of Ballynobber.

Seamus was strapped into a chair like apparatus and so was Maureen and both were sitting up.

In the darkness machines were moving.

Then a laser cut through the air and scanned Seamus' head.

A strange tentacled alien dropped into view and then out again.

A rotating hologram of Seamus' head appeared in front of him and machines whirred into life again.

"Are you lost?" asked Seamus. "Do you need to go to America? We come from Ballynobber, Ireland. We can give you directions to America."

The tentacled alien moved in close and then away again.

The holographic head moved directly above his head and into a rig which was above his chair.

There was more noise and something metallic was drilled, shaped and formed.

"For Jaysus sake don't annoy them Seamus," said Maureen.

"I need to milk me cows in the morning," said Seamus. "Come on now lads, let us go for Gawds sake."

However an object began to lower towards Seamus's head which looked like the head of a mushroom.

The flat underside had a disc shaped opening in the middle about the size of a head.

It positioned itself so that Seamus' head would fit inside.

Tentacles started to drop out of the opening and lashed the air looking for something to grab onto.

One of the tentacles brushed Seamus' head.

"What about me milkers?" were Seamus' last words as the tentacles grabbed hold of Seamus' head and pulled it inside the structure.

The disc shaped opening tightened around his neck and he started to kick out making some kind of muffled scream.

Maureen watched and screamed as Seamus was Shroomed.

He convulsed for a minute or two and then settled and the Shroom became a part of his body.

"AH JAYSUS SEAMUS! NO!!!" she shouted and screamed until she ran out of breath and then projectile vomited.

Then the large alien approached again and scanned her head.

Maureen blinked and was Shroomed next but this time it was quicker.



# The Super Amazing Music Festival

It was a fine summer's day and school was out.

The holidays were here and Frank assembled the band members outside his father's camper van which looked very tired and old.

"Does it work?" asked Niall.

Frank nodded. "Just about. I'll drive," he said. "We're gonna compete in a battle of the bands." Frank passed around a flyer.

"The Super Amazing Music Festival in Longford, near Ballynobber," said James reading it aloud.

"Never heard of it," said Michael.

"Guys! I need some more positive energy now. We have to get out there and raise our profile and let the world know about us! We have to sing each song like we're a world famous band," said Frank.

"In Ballynobber?" said Michael.

"Ballynobber is only the beginning. All of the other new bands of our generation will be there. Let that idea sink in. OUR generation."

Ela looked like she was in. "Where will we stay?"

"In this amazing location," said Frank. "It's within our budget."

Niall scratched his hair. "Camp-site Camp Long." He looked at the pictures. "It looks shite."

"More positive energy," said Frank, tapping Niall on the shoulder. "We go next weekend."

"What's the prize?" asked James.

"Winners gets a weekend in Ballynobber Hotel and Spa and they'll cover the cost of five hours in a recording studio of our choice." He paused. "Once it's not too expensive."

# The Council of the Elders

Ballynobber Pub. The Wet Stuff.

Mickey McGrath waited for the committee to form in his bar.

He owned the local bar and hotel and had been one of the main organizers of the music festival.

Outside, there were rows of Wellington boots from the farmers who were having an early pint.

Garda Seanie McHagerty sat quietly and respectfully until everyone had assembled.

Local Councillor Páidí de Barra sipped on his whiskey.

"We have a quorum," said Páidí, running out of patience.

They looked to Seanie.

"Tell them," said Páidí.

"Seamus and Maureen have gone missing," said Seanie. "They haven't been seen for forty-eight hours. I need to send out a search party."

"But the festival is tomorrow," said Mickey. "I'm all booked up. You'll scare off the punters if everyone hears people have gone missing in Ballynobber. If it goes well, this festival will put Ballynobber on the map."

The local shop keepers nodded.

"Times are tight Seanie, can't we wait until the festival is over?"

"I have a job to do," said Seanie.

Páidí leaned in. "So do we. We have bring in the bread and butter lad. Like they said, times are tight and another day won't matter. Come on now and we'll buy you a pint on the house. Where are those sandwiches Mickey."

Seanie sighed.

Páidí leaned in. "This is a good parish to be in, isn't it Seanie. We don't want to be complaining about you now. Sure you're a grand lad. Take a drink will ya. Another day won't do any harm."

Seanie bit his lip.

"I'll fill out the paper work tonight. We can process it tomorrow. But that's it," said Seanie stubbornly. "I'll get a few of the lads to search the land privately."

"Grand lad," said Páidí and threw back his whiskey chaser.

"Jaysus, that's a fine piece of land there," said Brendan, smiling with happiness that the festival was not being disturbed.

"Sure by Jaysus it is," said Mickey and he raised his glass in a toast to the festival.

## Dame Camp Long

When they arrived at Camp Long, James and Ela got the Camper van and the rest of the band pitched their two tents and settled in.

Tomorrow was the battle of the bands and Ela stood at the back of the Camper Van while she sipped a beer.

A lot of people were in the Camp-site because of the festival and there was a buzz in the air.

An old lady walked up to Ela and introduced herself.

"Are you here for the festival?" said Daisy.

Ela smiled and nodded.

"Do you have any more beer?" asked Daisy. She wiped the grey hair from over her face. Ela saw the age lines around her eyes but she smiled in a sweet way. "I'm Daisy."

Ela nodded and gave her one, feeling a little sorry for the old dear.

She seemed out of place in the camp-site.

"Are you here for the festival as well?" asked Ela.

"No, no, I've been here all Summer. I do really love to Camp," she said. "I have a larger summer home in Cork but I like to spend my time here because I like to be close to nature. My family are quite rich and a bit snobby about camping but you have to live your own life, is what I say. If you ever make it down to Cork your friends are free to stay there and practise your music. Our home covers hundreds of acres near the sea."

Ela nodded. "You're very kind, I am Ela, nice to meet you. Excuse me but we have to get ready for a practise session," she said. "Big day tomorrow!"

Daisy nodded and wandered over to the next group of people and they began to chat to her.

They gave her a sandwich.

Ela went back into the Camper van and noticed that James was watching Daisy.

"She's been here all summer," said Ela. "Can you imagine. She told me she's very rich and we could use her property for band practise."

However James just smiled.

"What?" asked Ela.

"The owner of the camp-site warned me about her and not to give her any food or drink." James sipped his beer. "He lets her stay here because she lost her home but he told me she's crazy and not to go near her."

Ela flushed red with anger. "Well I talked to her and I think she's sweet! She's just a little old lady!!" shouted Ela and stormed out of the Camper.

## Another Planet

Frank rounded up the band to go on a reconnaissance mission to figure out who was the competition in the camp site.

They walked by the boy band called Electric Mountain Light who were humming a tune completely out of harmony and the two twin sisters Gemini, faced each other with their tambourine and tin whistle, playing some modern version of a traditional Irish tune.

Finally they came across the lone guitar player Dara sitting in a Zen like position. He had spiky purple hair.

He looked up at the band and walked over to them, recognizing them.

"You're Different, right?" said Dara.

The band nodded.

"I love your music, man," he said. He opened his arms. "Let's hug it out," said Dara smiling.

Frank, Niall and Ela gave Dara a giant group hug.

However, James and Michael just stood back, looking unimpressed.

They walked on after the hug.

"What planet does that guy come from?" complained James.

"Yeah, what a weirdo," said Michael.

"Loser," griped James.

"Muppet," commented Michael finally.

Niall and Ela shook their heads.

"I don't believe it," commented Frank.

Ela looked at Frank.

"They finally agree on something."

## Battle of the Bands

Ela sat beside James in the large tented area with the stage.

The presenters went through the initial festival prize giving before the battle of the bands began.

"Best Apple pie goes to Winnie O'Shea."

Everyone clapped politely as she was given her bottle of whiskey.

"And Jenny's rhubarb and custard desert wins best tasty treat."

More polite clapping.

"Finally ladies and gentlemen before the Battle of the Bands starts, we'll do the draw for the big prize."

A sheep was then brought out onto the stage.

"First prize is a special Ballynobber bred sheep who we have decided to call Breda. Donated by none other than the Blarney Brothers on Camp Long hill."

Everyone took out their tickets including Ela.

"You bought a shagging ticket for a sheep?" asked James.

Ela nodded. "I've always wanted to own a sheep," she said earnestly.

A random person was brought onto the stage and picked the winning ticket.

"Well I don't believe it!" said the presenter. "The winner is The Blarney Brothers."

There was some booing but the brothers took the sheep away anyway.

"And now, before the battle of the bands, our warm up act is Nobber Dance! Take it away!"

Hundreds of the villagers both young and old rushed onto the stage and began an Irish dancing routine that let up to a crescendo of Irish Dancing. By the time it was over the entire village was clapping and cheering at the synchronized Irish dancing.

James and Ela stood up and politely clapped and cheered.

James leaned into Ela and said quietly to her. "You know that sheep they were raffling had a wooden leg."

Ela just made a face at James but then smiled a little.

## The Morning After

The next morning, people were waking up to a new day and Frank sat with Ela, James and Niall in their tent.

Michael had blasted his brain cells with vodka and lay huddled up in the corner.

"Fourth is not bad, really. It's just a competition," said Niall.

James exploded "ITS JUST A COMPETITION?! WE WERE THE BEST BAND THERE!!"

"Making music is not a popularity contest," said Niall. "We were judged by a bunch of bidders in all fairness."

"We are the voice of this generation! No-one can stop us," said Frank.

"Oh God, I feel so sick," complained Michael. He ran out of the tent and vomited.

"We are the most original band of our generation," continued Frank. "Plus I have an idea."

"What?" asked Ela.

"Tonight we're going to make a video in the woods of our song Spookarama."

"With what?" asked James.

"Our Smartphones."

Michael came back into the tent. "You're not going to believe this," said Michael, "but one of the lads in the boy band is getting off with Daisy. He's sticking his tongue down her throat."

They all made a sound like they were going to get sick.

"Ok it's agreed then," said Frank. "We make the video tonight."

# Forest Run

Darkness had fallen and the night was moonless.

Frank stood in Camp Long Forest with Ela and there were what looked like tears in his eyes.

Michael and James had threatened to break up the band after an argument about what the music video was about.

They had stormed off in opposite directions.

Niall sighed and just walked away as well.

"Are you crying?" asked Ela.

"No," said Frank.

"What's wrong?" she wondered.

"I don't want the band to break up. It's the best thing that has ever happened to me."

He sniffled a little.

"All I ever wanted to be was be in a band and become rich and famous."

Ela nodded.

"Look we can make this video together." She placed her hand on Frank's shoulder and smiled.

"I think you're really talented. You've so many ideas for the band. You keep us together."

"I DO!" said Frank. "And I get no thanks. And YOU HAVE A GREAT VOICE!" he said loudly.

"You could lead this band!!"

She smiled and then kissed Frank.

They pulled apart immediately when they heard James' voice in the forest calling out.

"ELA WHERE ARE YOU?"

James' dim voice echoed between the trees.

Then something very unexpected happened.

A teenage lad sprinted past them like his life was in danger.

"THEY'RE COMING! THEY'RE COMING! THE SHROOMS ARE COMING!!! RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!!!!" he screamed out.

Ela grabbed hold of Frank and screamed a little.

"Who was that?" she asked in shock.

"One of the members of the boy band," said Frank. "What a stupid pratt."

# The Farm

When the festival was in full swing Garda Seanie took a call on his cell phone.

"We've found a body on Seamus' farm," said Garda Sheila. "Doctor Tubbercurry is taking a look."

"Where?"

"In the hay shed," said Sheila.

"All right Sheila, I'll be there in about ten minutes," said Seanie.

He had mixed emotions. They hadn't cancelled the festival and he wasn't sure how it would play out if anything bad happened to someone else attending the festival.

He finished the call and wasn't sure to be relieved or more stressed to hear a body had been found.

When he arrived at the farm, Sheila, Joe and Doc Tubbercurry were gathered around the body.

Farmer Joey Duff was rubbing his hand off his chin.

"Awful stuff, poor Seamus," he said as he looked at Seamus' Shroomed body.

A pitch fork was sticking out of his chest and there was something metal and mushroom shaped covering his head.

"Are you sure it's Seamus?" asked Seanie.

"Boy I'd know those Wellington Boots anywhere," said Joey.

"We searched him and found his wallet," said Sheila. "It's him."

"Looks like he's only dead a few hours," said Doc. "Rigor mortis has not set in."

"Do ya' think Maureen did it?" asked Joe. "Maybe they were fifty shading."

"Go on home now Joe," said Seanie. He raised his eyes.

"Who do you think will get the farm? They weren't married last I heard," inquired Joe.

"I'll drive you home Joe," said Sheila pushing him out of the barn.

"What do you think the thing on his head is?" asked Seanie looking at the Shroom.

"We'll need to take it back to Ballyobber and I'll try to take it off," said Doc Tubbercurry.

Seanie wiped his hands over his mouth.

In the village of Ballynobber the festival was in full swing.

Seanie wished this had happened on another weekend.

"Ok let's move him into the Jeep," said Seanie.



# The Angelus

Farmer Ben was looking over his farm of crops which had strange crop circles and mushroom design patterns.

They had appeared the day after the music festival and Ben suspected the festival goers were behind the damage to his crops.

In the village of Ballynobber the church bells rang out for the Angelus.

The bells rang out daily at six pm in the time honoured tradition.

In the forest of Ballynobber, drone like Shrooms numbering a couple of hundred lifted out of the forest and headed towards the village.

"What the feck?" asked Farmer Ben.

One of the floating Shrooms approached him as he rested on his walking stick.

"Fecking fecker!" he said to the Shroom, realizing they had damaged his crops.

He looked up at it, waving his walking stick and then he was Shroomed.

In the village of Ballynobber, the Shrooms attacked.

Villagers and the left overs of the music festival ran and screamed along the main street.

As some of them were Shroomed, they were picked up by the Shrooms and carried away with their legs kicking.

On the main street, Betsy Barney who was in her late seventies heard the front door bell ring.

She was suffering from mild dementia.

She opened the door and saw three Shrooms floating in the air.

"Would you like a cup of tea?" she asked.

Outside the Parish Church the Shrooms followed the parishioners as they flooded into the Church for sanctuary.

Parish Priest Father Finny McTimmy pushed out of the Church to see what was happening.

He said his final words before being Shroomed.

"HOLY GUACAMOLE!"

## Shrooms Away!

Garda Seanie and Garda Sheila stood in the mortician's work room of the Ballynobber Funeral Home with Doc Tubbercurry. They were allowed use the rooms for Seamus' body by Bidy McBride who normally ran the funeral services.

Doc Tubbercurry had gloves and a gown on and the local mechanic Josey Maloney fired up his acetylene torch.

He dropped his helmet and applied the flame to the metal.

He burned his way through the metal Shroom's outer coating and took the top off the Shroom with his heat resistant gloves.

Green goo and slime poured onto the floor and what looked like some kind of weird alien octopus flopped lifelessly onto the floor.

However it was still attached by some kind of hooked claw into Seamus' brain.

Doc shone in a light and was outspoken in his analysis.

"God Bejaysus," said Doc Tubbercurry. "Mother of all the Saints in heaven," he said sounding medical.

The skin and the bone around Seamus' skull was gone.

The optic chords had been snipped off so his two eyeballs lay in the goo on the floor and his teeth and jaw were flattened out as if the bone had been softened and reshaped to cement the skull into the Shroom.

The Shroom had burrowed into the centre of Seamus' brain.

"It's gone right into his medulla oblongata and attached to the Thalamus from what I can see," he commented washing his hands.

Josey switched off his torch and lifted his helmet. "That's bad is it?" he asked.

Sheila, Seanie, Doc all looked at Josey together and replied in the same way.

"Yes."

Sheila and Seanie looked at each other in a concerned manner.

Outside the bells had begun to sound for the Angelus and then the screaming began.

# It's Raining Shrooms!

In the immediate aftermath of the attack on Ballynobber the new Shrooms were brought to Camp Long for Shrooming.

People in the camp site looked on with horror as the camp site began to rain Shrooms as the villagers slowly dropped in from the sky.

Some were still kicking their legs but others were passive as their brains were being made part of the Shroom.

Above the Camp site the mother ship de-cloaked finally revealing itself and there was even more panic.

More Shrooms flew out of it.

The group members of the band Different assembled under it and looked up.

"It's an alien invasion!" shouted Niall. "Jaysus, why did they pick Ballynobber?"

"Who cares!" shouted Frank. "TO THE RENTAL COTTAGES! FOLLOW ME!!" he ordered.

They made their way to a rental cottage and forced the door open and went inside.

"I think I know why they picked Ireland for Shrooming," gasped Michael. "It all makes sense now."

"Why?" asked Ela.

"This country, it's perfect for them," said Michael as he fitted it all together. "We put up with endless crap and never complain. That's how we roll." He looked out of the window, pulling back the curtain to take a peek outside. He turned and looked at the band. "They must have read our newspapers."

## With a Little Help From My Friends

When the Shrooms had invaded the village, the locals in Ballynobber Pub The Wet Stuff had barricaded themselves in.

However the Shrooms pushed into the pub and began Shrooming the locals.

Billy Barrington threw his boots at the Shrooms but missed and was Shroomed.

Some of the locals retreated into the toilets but the Shrooms followed them in fearlessly and there was shouting and screaming and some splashing of water.

The owner of the pub Mickey McGrath tried a two handed defence.

In one hand he held a Hurley stick and a lump of wood in the other.

He knocked one of the Shrooms away but the other two knocked him over and sucked his head in and he screamed out and then went silent.

Local Councillor Páidí De Barra was crawling backwards from the Shrooming on the floor and pushing other locals in the way of the Shrooms in order to protect himself.

He crawled backwards until he hit a wall and there was no way out.

He was trapped.

He reached the table above him and drank the remains of a pint of Guinness and then threw the glass at the approaching Shrooms.

He then straightened his tie and stood up and reached out his hands, like he was at a local party meeting.

"Lads," he said, addressing the Shrooms. "We're all reasonable people here."

One of the Shrooms began to show its tentacles.

"I'm a politician, I CAN HELP YE!" he screamed.

He took another drink which looked like a Whiskey and knocked it back.

They seemed to pause for a second.

"I know this place like the back of me hand," he explained. "C'mon lads... Let's do a deal."

The Shrooms conferred.

## Fort Apache The Farm

The Band Different escaped from Camp Long by rushing out of the cottage.

The Shrooms had destroyed all the vehicles and they ran out of the Shroomed forest and towards a nearby farm in the darkness.

The mother ship had disappeared and the Shrooms with it,

Outside the abandoned farm they found the three legged sheep with the wooden leg.

"It must be the farm of the Blarney Brothers," said Frank.

There was also an abandoned Ambulance and some signs of a struggle.

Hastily they searched for food and water.

Niall found a cooked chicken in the fridge and tried to eat it all in one go.

However as he ate the Chicken leg, he failed to notice the Shroom that was on the ceiling directly above him.

It was too late.

The Shroom dropped down on Niall's head just before he screamed out.

He pushed against the table and plates went flying.

Frank arrived into the kitchen to see Niall being Shroomed and screamed at the top of his voice.

"DRUMMER IS DOWN! DRUMMER IS DOWN!!"

Ela screamed out and then rushed outside to the Ambulance and grabbed hold of the defibrillator.

She ran back into the kitchen and pushed Frank out of the way who was having a panic attack while trying to remove the Shroom.

It gave Frank an electric shock when he touched the Shroom.

Ela charged up the device and put the paddles against Niall.

"PUSH THE BUTTON!" screamed Ela.

"YOU'LL KILL HIM!" shouted Frank.

James ran into the kitchen and pressed the button. The charge was applied to Niall.

The Shroom seemed to make a strange screaming noise and launched off Niall's head punching through a wall.

In shock, the Shroom made its escape from the house.

Niall sat up but there was a green tentacle sticking out of his mouth which was wiggling uncontrollably.

Ela and Michael grabbed hold of it and dragged it out of Niall's mouth and smashed it with a

kitchen pan.

Then Niall began to vomit green grunge.

They watched as Niall vomited, and vomited, and vomited.

"That's a lot of puke," said Frank. "I don't think I've ever seen anyone puke that much."

Eventually Niall retched as the last of the green goo was expelled.

"I once saw someone puke that much when they drank vodka and liquorice and cider," said Michael.

"Did the Shroom mind merge with you and tell you its plans for destroying Earth?" asked Frank.

Niall just sat up and blew some green goo snot from his nose.

He looked at Frank.

"No," he replied. "But I do know something."

"What?" asked Ela.

"The green goo tastes minty."

## Brown Paper Envelopes

In the pub The Wet Stuff, Páidí De Barra had made a deal with the Shrooms

One of them walked over to him with a brown paper envelope stuffed with fifty Euro notes.

Páidí counted them carefully. "Grand stuff lads. You're finally figuring out how this place works." He looked at the Shroom behind the bar who used to be the owner of the pub and made his next demand. "I want six pints of your finest Guinness and none of your slops. I want eight packets of crisps and all those sandwiches."

As each pint was served he swallowed it down then he let out an almighty belch before finally finishing off the sandwiches.

"Right now lads," he said, pulling up his trousers over his fat belly. "Let's get to work! There's villagers to be Shroomed."

# Operation Wait And See

In the house of the Blarney Brothers, the Band Different gathered around the TV looking for information on the alien invasion.

However the only story on the television was about how Ballynobber had been quarantined because they had a dangerous water supply due to the fact that the villagers had refused to pay their water rates.

An official was brought out. "This is what happens when you don't pay your water rates. You end up quarantined. So please, please, please pay your water bills."

The Band shook their heads.

"Ring Dublin Castle!" demanded Niall. "Get the army on the line!"

Frank rang Dublin Castle and explained that Ballynobber had been attacked by aliens.

Eventually he hung up and the band gathered around him.

"Well?" asked Michael and James.

"The government are on their Summer holidays and they don't have the resources to fight an Alien Invasion but they do have a plan in place."

Frank folded his arms.

"So are they going to rescue us?" insisted Ela.

Frank tapped his foot.

"Not quite."

"So what are they going to bleeding do?" asked Michael.

"It's called Operation Wait And See."

"What does that mean?" asked Ela.

"It means they're going to... wait and see. No one in and no one out of Ballynobber until the government are back from their holidays." Frank sighed loudly. "Lads we're on our own."

"When do their holidays end?" asked Niall.

"Sometime next year, I think," replied Frank. "We need a survival plan."



# The Ballynobber Resistance

Hunger forced the Band into Ballynobber village.

They stopped near a petrol station that had supplies and crept inside.

"We need bread, milk and ham and real butter - not that fake margarine," said Frank keeping guard.  
"And for God's sake don't forget the Barry's Teabags."

Ela looked at James and Michael who would go in. "We also need water."

Slowly, keeping low they went into the shop, looking for food.

James stuffed bars of chocolate in his pockets and then the two brothers came to a toy section in the shop and both gasped.

Left on the shelves were two solitary toys, an Action Man and a HeMan toy sitting side-by-side.

The two brother looked at each other and moved on, then came to the bread and milk part of the shop.

"Looks like someone has been here already," complained Michael. There was only skimmed milk left.

However the two brothers were quickly surrounded by another group of teenagers. Some were holding Hurleys and wearing Hurley masks.

"HALT!" shouted a girl who was wearing a Wok on her head which was kept in place by tape.

There were about ten teenagers in the shop wearing various things on their head.

A few of them had pots and pans on their head and some had plastic mixing bowls.

The brothers stood up and looked at the other group.

"Who are you?" asked Michael.

"We are the Ballynobber resistance!" said the girl Grainne.

"Do those work?" asked James.

"So far only the Wok has worked," said Jimmy, looking sad. "But we're experimenting."

Frank wandered into the shop with Ela and Niall wondering what was taking so long.

He introduced himself.

"Hi, I'm Frank and I am the leader of our group."

The others just made a face and looked at him. Niall just raised his eyes.

"Is there any ham left?" asked Frank. "I'm fecking starving!"

He cracked open a packet of biscuits and took another look at their head gear.

"You guys look ridiculous,"

He stuffed biscuits into his mouth.

Grainne ignored Frank and began talking to Ela.

## Emperor Páidí

Páidí had spent the day going from house to house, luring out locals who were hiding in their houses by calling to them or pretending he had a stash of food and water. He told them everything was going to be fine and then lured them out into the open where they were Shroomed.

After several dozen more people were Shroomed Páidí retired to the pub for a few late evening pints. Some Shrooms then invited him to join them outside with simple sign language.

Outside and above the Pub The Wet Stuff the mother ship de-cloaked and a set of stairs lowered to the ground so that Páidí could walk up and see the ship for a VIP tour.

He brought his pint with him and climbed the stairs to the Shroom Ship.

"So you want me to see Campaign head quarters," said Páidí.

The Shrooms nodded and he went on board.

"Jaysus lads you've a grand set-up here," he said and he walked by the giant lake of green goo where a lot of the Shrooms hung out and drank from to replenish their energy.

They went into the operational command centre and stood around a table with a hologram of planet Earth.

A picture of the Universe was beside it. On the other side of the milky way was the giant Shroom fleet which laid in wait for a Go signal from the scout ship.

"So there's just one lot of ye lot here?" asked Páidí. He sipped his pint. "Doing a bit of canvassing are ye before the big operation?"

The Shrooms nodded.

"Look lads I can help ye. All we need to do is take over all these cities." He pointed to the various world capitals. "Then you can put me in the White House and I'll read all the speeches you want." He was slightly drunk and his voice slurred a little. "When it's all said and done, you can make me Emperor of Earth and then the entire Universe. But I have one extra condition!" He raised his hand a little. "You have to make sure that there will always be a good supply of Guinness and fresh Sandwiches. I have to keep up my strength." He belched and farted a little. "What do you think lads?" asked Páidí.

The Shrooms conferred and gave him the thumbs up.

Páidí raised his glass and finished his pint.

## The Final Conflict

In the dark of the night when the Shrooms were not very active, the Ballynobber resistance climbed the steps up to the mother ship which were near the Pub The Wet Stuff.

"What's the plan?" asked Frank as they crept on board.

All of the band Different were wearing Woks on their head like Grainne which afforded them some protection from detection.

"Maybe we can implant a virus on board their computer," said Niall.

Jimmy the nerd of the other team just sighed. "How is that going to work?"

"I have no shagging idea!" whispered Niall. "Have you any better ideas?"

"Why don't we smash their machines up!" said Frank. "Give them a good kicking."

They sat and thought about the other options.

While they were conferring on a strategy on how to destroy the mother ship, brothers James and Michael relieved themselves by pissing into the lake of green goo.

"Better out than in," said James.

Michael nodded. He also pissed into the green goo and both brothers had a pissing competition, seeing who could piss the furthest.

As they did the green goo started to bubble and then boil violently. It changed colour and flames started to shoot out of it.

Alarms started to sound on board the ship as the goo caught fire in some kind of piss related chain reaction.

The others turned around wondering what was going on.

"WE HAVE A PLAN!" shouted James. "EVERYONE PISS INTO THE GREEN GOO!"

Suddenly everyone (but the girls) were pissing into the green goo.

The ship rocked from explosions.

"I'M ALMOST OUT!" shouted Jimmy, as he ran out of piss.

"THINK ABOUT WATERFALLS!" shouted Frank.

Normally docile Shrooms ran around the ship panicking as flames went up their pipes and into their main reactor chamber.

"LET'S GET OFF THIS SHIP BEFORE IT BLOWS!" shouted James but was pushed out of the way by Councillor Páidí who seemed to appear from nowhere.

"Where did he come from?" asked Niall.

"WHO CARES!" shouted Ela. "JUMP!"

They jumped off the Shroom ship and onto the top of a shed which broke their fall.

They lifted their Woks and watched as the Shroom ship vented jets of fire and then exploded and crashed into the pub The Wet Stuff flattening it and almost the rest of the village.

Flames flew everywhere and Páidí screamed out as the pub was destroyed.

Soon Operation Wait And See was over and everyone rolled into the village now that the hard work was over.

Television crews arrived and tried to interview everyone.

Páidí saw the army approaching and took up a big piece of wood and started beating the head off a Shroom near him which was barely moving.

"You'll never take Ballynobber you Shroom! We will resist!!" said Páidí beating the head off the Shroom.

The army soldiers approached.

"Thank God you're here lads!" said Páidí. He hugged the nearest army person who was a female officer and slapped a kiss on her.

### *Epilogue.*

As the Band different walked out of the almost wiped out town of Ballynobber after the alien invasion, Frank had a bounce in his step.

"Well that didn't go too bad after all," he said. "We got a lot of publicity after that one. Everyone will know who Different are now."

Niall just shook his head and sighed, having nearly been Shroomed.

"I have an idea lads!" said Frank.

"What?" asked Ela, thinking they would do some kind of benefit concert for the village.

"Let's make a musical about this!"

Michael and James just looked at Frank and said the same thing together.

"SHAG OFF!" they said and then they both began to argue.

Niall raised his eyes and threw his arm over Ela's shoulder.

"Here's looking at you," he said to Ela and winked at her, like it had all been a terrible dream.

The End.